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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/781,534	02/17/2004	Hirohisa Kato	5095-4083	2439
27123	7590	06/22/2007	EXAMINER	
MORGAN & FINNEGANT, L.L.P. 3 WORLD FINANCIAL CENTER NEW YORK, NY 10281-2101			BERTHEAUD, PETER JOHN	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3746		
		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
		06/22/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/781,534	KATO ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Peter J. Bertheaud	3746

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 February 2004.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-16 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 17 February 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/26/2004.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 5-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In claims 5, 6, and 9 it is unclear as to whether the combination of the compressor and gas, or one of the subcombinations, is being claimed. For the purposes of examination, the structural limitations, particularly those referring to the compressor, will be examined due to the wording "an electric compressor...comprising" in claim 1 and "the electric compressor including" in claim 9.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-5, 7, and 9-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Gerstmann 4,501,253.

Gerstmann discloses an electric compressor 26 arranged in a conduit for a flammable gas (see Fig. 1 and abstract), the electric compressor (Fig. 2) including: a housing 31 having a suction port 42 and a discharge port 57, an inside of the housing

serving as a passage for the flammable gas; an electric actuator 33 sealingly accommodated in the housing; and a compression unit 32 sealingly accommodated in the housing, the compression unit 32 being driven by the electric actuator 33, wherein the suction port is located closer to the electric actuator 33 than to the compression unit 32. Gerstmann further discloses that the suction port 42 is located closer to the electric actuator 33 than to the compression unit 32 and is arranged at an end portion of the electric compressor 26 relative to an axial direction of the electric actuator 33.

Gerstmann also discloses that a gas sensor 43 provided in at least one of the suction port 42 and the housing, and that the at least one gas sensor 43 detects the presence of oxygen (see col. 3, lines 50-68, and col. 4, lines 1-3). Gerstmann further discloses that at least one gas sensor 43 serves as a sensor for detecting a concentration of the main component of the flammable gas. Gerstmann also discloses that the concentration of the main component could exceed an explosive limit concentration around the electric actuator 33 in the housing (see col. 3, lines 50-68, and col. 4, lines 1-3).

In addition, while features of an apparatus may be recited either structurally or functionally, claims directed to an apparatus must be distinguished from the prior art in terms of structure rather than function, because apparatus claims cover what a device is, not what a device does (Hewlett-Packard Co. v. Bausch & Lomb Inc., 909 F.2d 1464, 1469, 15 USPQ2d 1525, 1528 (Fed. Cir. 1990)). Thus, if a prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use as recited in the preamble, or elsewhere in a claim, then it meets the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gerstmann 4,501,253.

Gerstmann discloses the invention as discussed above. Furthermore, It would have been obvious at the time of invention that the electric compressor unit 26 is capable of compressing hydrogen gas containing more than 75% of hydrogen.

In addition, while features of an apparatus may be recited either structurally or functionally, claims directed to an apparatus must be distinguished from the prior art in terms of structure rather than function, because apparatus claims cover what a device is, not what a device does (Hewlett-Packard Co. v. Bausch & Lomb Inc., 909 F.2d 1464, 1469, 15 USPQ2d 1525, 1528 (Fed. Cir. 1990)). Thus, if a prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use as recited in the preamble, or elsewhere in a claim, then it meets the claim.

7. Claims 8, 15, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gerstmann 4,501,253 in view of Nakane 6,551,081.

Gerstmann discloses the invention as discussed above. However, Gerstmann does not teach the following claimed limitations taught by Nakane.

Nakane teaches a scroll compressor 1 for a fuel cell comprising a suction port 33 and a discharge port 44. Nakane further teaches that the compressor supplies hydrogen gas to a fuel cell. Nakane also teaches that the gas supply system includes a circulation conduit, whereby flammable gas circulates to flow into the electric compressor (see col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-8).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the pump of Gerstmann, by including a circulation conduit in order to expand the gases exhausted from the supply target (Nakane, col. 4, lines 66-67 and col. 5, lines 1-8).

Conclusion

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Peter J. Bertheaud whose telephone number is (571) 272-3476. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9am - 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anthony Stashick can be reached on (571) 272-4561. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3746

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


PJB
6/19/07


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